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The University of Dayton

News Release

Feb. 5, 1992

Contact: Pam Huber

POLISH-AMERICAN PROFESSOR FROM UD TEACHES BUSINESS SKILLS IN POLAND

DAYTON, Ohio -- When Gene Gomolka returns to Poland on March 1, he will help to open a promising avenue in the country's emerging free-enterprise economy--three new entrepreneurial institutes designed to foster small businesses.

Gomolka, professor of management at the University of Dayton and a second-generation Polish-American, is one of seven Americans working on the joint U.S.-Polish project. In November he went to Poland to teach a three-day management class for 17 Polish faculty members, who will soon be teaching Polish business operators at the new institutes in Poznan, Rzeszow and Bialystok.

The project is sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and Solidarity's Economic Foundation in Poland. It is directed by the Center on Education and Training for Employment at Ohio State University.

"The tradition in Poland is for schools of economics rather than business administration," said Gomolka, who taught through an interpreter. "So faculty members don't have a distinct expertise. The point of the project is to aid development of faculty in various areas--management, marketing, finance, entrepreneurship and business advising."

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At the new institutes, the Polish faculty members will teach 20-hour courses. "Entrepreneurs don't have a year or two," said Gomolka. "They need to learn the fundamental things that are important--strategic planning, setting goals, dealing with people, how to solve problems and make decisions. This is where people usually fail in their businesses."

Poland's unemployment rate reached 12 percent in December, but projections show that it may get as high as 30 percent when most state-run operations are converted to private organizations. "Founding and developing small businesses is seen as one answer to unemployment," said Gomolka.

A national conference in May will bring faculty members from all across Poland together to talk about small business development.

"For me it's been a real thrilling experience being able to contribute something to that situation," said Gomolka, whose grandparents left Poland for the United States in the 1890s. A different twist of fate might have found him in the old country, struggling to understand a new set of economic rules.

"I'm glad they left," he said, "but I consider it a great honor and responsibility to be able to give something back to Poland."

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For media interviews with **Gene Gomolka**, a resident of Kettering, Ohio, and Reston, Va., call his UD office at (513) 229-4213. Additional members of the project are Jerry Hills and Randy Rollison from the University of Illinois at Chicago; Lynn Neeley of Northern Illinois University; Ernest Cadotte of the University of Tennessee; and Rod Terminello and Cathy Ashmore of Ohio State University.